

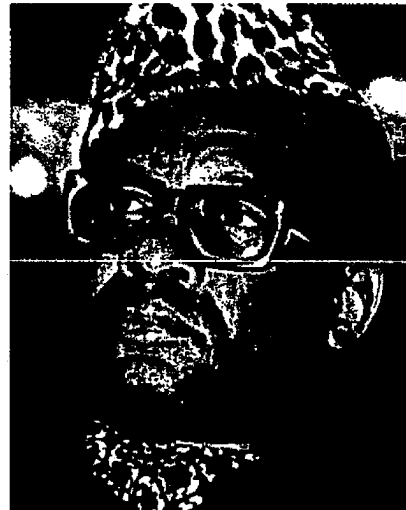
MOBUTU Sese Seko
(Phonetic: moBOOtoo)

ZAIRE

President (since November 1965)

Addressed as:
Mr. President or Citizen President

One of Africa's premier political tacticians, Mobutu Sese Seko has perfected an innate ability to overcome adversity [redacted]. Regarded by his people as the all-powerful leader, he succeeded in 1965 in uniting a nation that had been split by violence since independence in 1960. We believe Zairians fear that if he were to fall, the nation would return to the chaos of the early 1960s. Mobutu is in his third consecutive seven-year term. He is also the president-founder of the Popular Movement of the Revolution (MPR—Zaire's only political party), a role he values highly. [redacted]



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Foreign Policy

Throughout his presidency, Mobutu has generally considered his country to be a friend of the West and has distrusted Soviet intentions. [redacted]

The President plays an active role on selected African issues. In May 1982 he reestablished diplomatic relations with Israel, becoming the first black African head of state to do so since most African countries severed diplomatic ties in 1973. [redacted] he acted with great boldness when he ordered some 2,000 troops into Chad in July 1983 to support the government of President Hissein Habré, which has been under attack from Libyan-backed dissidents, and in late 1985 he reaffirmed his support for France if it should intervene militarily in Chad. Mobutu has made a bid for regional leadership by proposing the formation of a league of black African states, a move most of his fellow African presidents believe would split the continent and undermine the Organization of African Unity. [redacted]

(cont.)
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